THAT THE PURPOSE OF GOD ACCORDING TO ELECTION MIGHT STAND
The woman with the thin face was captivated by the sermon. Her attention was fixed and her eyes widened with each new section introduced. She’d never heard the End Times preached so plainly. The speaker flitted expertly from Daniel to Revelation and back again.

She heard how the great bear of communism would stumble and collapse, how Islam was rising to persecute the church and what personal qualities would allow early identification of the Beast and the Man of Sin. It was heady stuff and she lapped it up. Next week it would be ‘Creation’, next month, ‘The Role of Women in the Church’. She could hardly wait.

The young man with short hair sits bolt upright with almost military poise. For him the best sermons emphasis God’s judgment on sin. He wants to hear about God’s punishment on abortionists and sodomites. He is passionate about direct Christian action and is eager to know what protests and demonstrations are planned for the Spring campaign.

A young woman sits cradling a child in her arms. It distracts her occasionally but she is not concerned. All she needs is the closing application. The theology isn’t unimportant but she has learned to leave thinking about it to the pastor. As long as he tells her what to do and when to do it she is content. She is particular about the length of her quiet-time, the length of her dress and the length of her hair.

The teenagers are getting restless. They need a good story. Quick, vivid language and expansive hand gestures re-capture their attention. The preacher’s voice rises, he moves from behind the pulpit and leans towards the spellbound faces, he pauses ..., smiles, whispers gently. The moment is pure drama and he returns to his powerpoint presentation.

The society-rep is accomplished in his subject. He enlarges upon the scale of the task undone, “much has been achieved but there is still a mountain to climb”. He shows how the nation’s moral strength is ebbing and supports his claims with shocking examples and worrying statistics. His delivery is persuasive and everyone present is convinced he is right about everything he says.

But is the Lord Jesus Christ being preached? What is said may be true, but simply telling the truth from the pulpit is not enough. A holy nation may be desireable, but showing the congregation their duty is not enough. Applying Biblical lessons and examples is not enough. Even enjoining the listeners to holy living and Christian service is insufficient. The skill of a storyteller or the passion of a preacher will not meet a congregation’s true need if the person and work of Jesus Christ is not evidently and constantly set forth in their midst.

To preach Christ we must begin with Christ. “Behold the Lamb of God!” Time is short and men’s souls are at stake so tell them who Christ is, as God and as Man. Preach His purpose in time and from eternity. Preach His words and His works, preach blood atonement, redemption, forgiveness, reconciliation. Preach grace and mercy and its meaning for guilty souls and needy sinners. Preach Christ’s present closeness and future coming, by all means, but always preach Him.

There will be preaching until the end of time. There will be faces in the congregation. What will be the substance and who will be the subject of that preaching? It is all of our responsibility to lift up Jesus Christ in our midst so that all may look on Him, and seeing Him, to look and live.
CHOSEN TO SALVATION

It is manifest then ... that there is a people chosen to salvation out of the mass of mankind ... and that all the causes of it are in God’s free love and mercy on the one hand, and in his justice and holy judgment on the other.

What rendered Abel’s offering more acceptable than Cain’s? We are told by the Apostle, that it was faith (Hebrews 11). Now, faith is the gift of God, which was bestowed upon him, and not upon his brother; and therefore it was that the one was accepted and righteous, and the other left to the naked form of an empty profession.

Ambrose Serle
It is strange to think of death as something precious. Death is our enemy, the wages of sin the harbinger of sorrow (1 Corinthians 15:26, Romans 6:23, Psalms 166:3). Yet, the Psalmist tells us that the death of a Christian is a precious matter to the Lord. What strength this must give every child of God as they anticipate their own death and what comfort to those who lose a loved one in the Lord. Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints (Psalm 116:15).

Spurgeon points out that Jehovah himself, views the triumphant deaths of his people with sacred delight. ‘They shall not die prematurely’, he says, ‘they shall be immortal till their work is done; and when their time shall come to die, then their deaths shall be precious. The Lord watches over their dying beds, smooths their pillows, sustains their hearts, and receives their souls. Those who are redeemed with precious blood are so dear to God that even their deaths are precious to him.’

And John Gill comments, ‘Saints are precious to him, living and dying; there is something in their death, or that attends it, that is delightful to him, and of high esteem with him; as when they are in the full exercise of grace at such a season; when they die in faith, and have hope in their death; and their love is drawn out unto him, and they long to be with him: besides, they die in the Lord, and sleep in Jesus, in union with him; with whom he is well pleased, and all in him; and they die unto him, according to his will, and are resigned unto it; and so glorify him in death, as well as in life. It is the time of their ingathering to him; at death he comes into his garden, and gathers his flowers, and smells a sweet savour in them; their very dust is precious to him, which he takes care of and raises up at the last day.’

The Testimony of Saints
William Rushton in his little book Particular Redemption considers the believer’s end and “precious death”. He writes, ‘in what manner soever the minds of the saints are exercised at last, whether they are sorrowful or whether they rejoice, they are made to bear witness more or less to the truth [of God’s free and sovereign grace in Christ]. Herein consists no small part of the preciousness of their death. For herein is God glorified, and his word magnified, when the gospel appears all-sufficient to support the soul in life and in death.'
He continues, 'we have many witnesses, who testify, with one accord, that the sovereign mercy of Israel’s Triune God, displayed in eternal election, special redemption, and spiritual revelation, was their support in life, and their only consolation in death. It would be easy to enlarge the catalogue with a cloud of witnesses; but the time would fail to tell of Owen, of Gill, of Brine, of Hervey, of Romaine, of Hawker, and of a thousand others, who lived and died in the faith of these truths. The Lord himself had instructed them with a strong hand; he had shown them the infinite evil of sin, and humbled them with such views of their real character, as condemned sinners, that they were convinced that nothing short of a finished and absolute salvation would meet their wretched case.

They therefore preached the gospel fixed and free, Not 'yea and nay', – it may or may not be; Such gospel God had taught them to detest, And in the certain gospel gave them rest.

The Passing of Mr Macgowan

Rushton provides his readers with an example of this preciousness of a saint’s death from the closing witness of Mr John Macgowan.

Mr John Macgowan, known to the world as the author of ‘Dialogues of Devils,’ and other ingenious works, was a Baptist minister, and pastor of the church meeting in Devonshire-square, London. In the early part of his life he was in connexion with the Wesleyan Methodists, but after his mind was enlightened to see the glory of sovereign grace, he zealously and publicly preached all those important truths which the Particular Baptists at that time steadily maintained.

To Mr Reynolds, a sound minister, who succeeded Mr Brine, we are indebted for the account of the dying testimony of Mr Macgowan. “I frequently visited him”, says Mr Reynolds, “in his last sickness, when he took occasion, as opportunity offered, of opening to me his whole heart.

At one time he was in great darkness of soul, and lamented exceedingly the withdrawals of the presence of God. Two things, he said, had deeply exercised his thoughts. The one was, how those heavy and complicated afflictions which God had seen fit to lay upon him could work so as to promote his real good. And the other was, that God, his best friend, should keep at a distance from his soul, when he knew how much his mind was distressed for the light of his countenance. ‘O!’ said he, turning to me, and speaking with great earnestness, ‘My soul longeth and panteth for God, for the living God; his love visits would cheer my soul, and make this heavy affliction sit light upon me. The wonted presence of Jesus, my Redeemer, I cannot do without. I trust he will return to me soon, yea I know he will in his own time; for he knows how much I need the influence of his grace!’ In this conversation he often mentioned the depravity of his nature, and what a burden he found it. ‘My heart,’ said he, ‘is more and more vile. Every day I have such humiliating views of heart corruption as weighs me down. I wonder whether any of the Lord’s people see things in the same light as I do.’ And then turning to me, he said, ‘And do you find it so, my brother?’ On my answering him in the affirmative, he replied, ‘I am glad of that.’

The next time, which was the last of my conversing with him, I found him in a sweet and heavenly frame; his countenance indicated the serenity of his mind. On my entering the room he exclaimed, ‘O my dear brother, how rejoiced am I to see you! sit down, and hear of the loving kindness of my God. You see me as ill as I can be whilst in this world, and as well as I can be whilst in the body. Methinks I have as much of heaven as I can hold.’ Then tears of joy, like a river, flowed from his eyes; and his inward pleasurable frame interrupted his speech for a time. He broke silence with saying, ‘The work will soon be over: but death to me has nothing terrific in it. I have not an anxious thought. The will of God and my will are one. ‘Tis all right, yet mysterious. You cannot conceive the pleasure I feel in this reflection, viz. that I have not shunned to declare (according to the best of my light and ability) the whole counsel of God. I can die on the doctrines I have preached. They are true; I find them so. Go on to preach the gospel of Christ, and mind not what the world may say of you.’

All the while I sat silent; and rising up to take my leave, fearing he would spend his strength too much, he immediately took me by the hand, and weeping over each other, we wished mutual blessings. On parting, he said ‘My dear brother, farewell; I shall see you no more.’

Thus I left my much esteemed friend and brother; and the next news I heard of him was, that on Saturday evening his immortal spirit left the body, to go to the world of light and bliss, and keep an eternal sabbath with God, angels, and saints.

Mr Macgowan departed this life, November 25, 1780, in the 55th year of his age.
Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.

(Zechariah 8:2)

Jealous for Zion

Our Jealous Saviour
In Zechariah 1:14 the prophet of God said, ‘The angel that communed with me said unto me, Cry thou, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I am jealous for Jerusalem and for Zion with a great jealousy.’ Because of His great jealousy for His people, God destroys the enemies of His people. ‘Therefore thus saith the LORD; I am returned to Jerusalem with mercies: my house shall be built in it, saith the LORD of hosts, and a line shall be stretched forth upon Jerusalem. Cry yet, saying, Thus saith the LORD of hosts; My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad; and the LORD shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem’ (Zechariah 1:16-17). Here, again, the Lord Jesus asserts that His jealousy for His chosen makes their salvation certain. ‘Thus saith the LORD of hosts; I was jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I was jealous for her with great fury.’

Christ’s Jealousy
Our great Saviour’s great jealousy for His Church, the bride He has espoused to Himself in everlasting love and tender mercy, is her everlasting security (Song of Solomon 8:6). The word translated ‘jealous’ is the same as the word ‘zealous’. Jealousy is zealousness. Where there is no jealousy, no burning zeal, there is no love. I do not love a person, if I do not zealously do my utmost for him or her. So it is with our God and Saviour, who ‘is a consuming fire’. He says, ‘Who would set the briers and the thorns,’ as enemies of His people, ‘against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together’ (Isaiah 27:4). He declares that He is jealous for His church, ‘with great fury’ against those who would pull her away from Him. Yet, our Lord Jesus declares to the object of His love, for whom He is jealous, ‘Fury is not in me’ (Isaiah 27:4).
Solomon wrote, 'Jealousy is the rage of a man' (Proverbs 6:34), the rage of a man against any and all who would steal the heart of the wife he loves (2 Corinthians 11:2-3). As at first our Saviour loved us simply because He loved us (Deuteronomy 7:7-8), He will bestow upon His chosen all good things simply because He loves us with an everlasting love. 'The zeal' (that is, the tender love and free grace, the burning jealousy) 'of the Lord of hosts shall do this' (Isaiah 9:7). For His word's sake (that is to say ‘for Christ's sake’), and according to His own heart, the Lord God has done and will do great things for the salvation of His people (2 Samuel 7:21).

Characteristics of Jealousy
Jealousy causes a man to be watchful and quick sighted. Even the slightest glance of one who desires his wife’s heart enrages the loving, jealous husband. So it is with our loving Saviour, who is jealous for our hearts. The slightest indignity done to His beloved spouse, His Hephzibah, seeking to take her heart from Him, will be met with His utmost fury. If Edom jeers at His prophet, ‘Watchman, what of the night? watchman, what of the night?’, if Ammon but claps his hands at God’s Israel, if he stomps his feet, or if he merely rejoices in his heart, when Christ’s bride is hurt, he will suffer for his daring insolence (Ezekiel 25:6-7; Joel 2:18).

Jealousy is merciless, violent, and cruel as the grave, burning as fire in a man’s heart (Song of Solomon 8:6). In fact, the word translated ‘jealous’ in Zechariah 8:2 is elsewhere translated ‘fiery thunderbolts’ (Psalms 78:48) and ‘burning fever’ (Deuteronomy 32:24). Jealousy puts a man into a feverish fit of outrage, and makes him burn for revenge. While those things are all evil in fallen man, they are gloriously just and righteous in our blessed Husband, the Lord Jesus. He will spit in the face of any Miriam who dares but to mutter against His Moses (Numbers 12:14). What, then, will He not do to those who would steal the heart of His bride?

And jealousy is implacable. It cannot be reconciled. ‘For jealousy is the rage of a man: therefore he will not spare in the day of vengeance. He will not regard any ransom; neither will he rest content, though thou givest many gifts’ (Proverbs 6:34-35). Balak was willing to give anything to have his will with Israel. He will spit in the face of any Miriam who dares but to mutter against His Moses (Numbers 12:14). What, then, will He not do to those who would steal the heart of His bride?

The Law of Jealousies
So jealous is God our Saviour for us that He established a law in Israel called ‘the law of jealousies,’ to show us how He, who ‘hateth putting away,’ keeps His beloved from leaving Him (Numbers 5:11-31). According to ‘the law of jealousies,’ if the wife was seen spending what appeared to the husband to be an inordinate amount of time with another man, she could be brought to a priest and given a test. The test was designed to prove her innocence, or establish her guilt.

We should not fail to observe that the test was only available to the husband. No such test existed if the wife suspected her husband of adultery. The burden of proof or innocence was entirely upon the suspected woman. We are nowhere told that adultery was more prevalent among wives than it was among husbands in Israel; but that may very well have been the case.
Hebrew women looked upon barrenness as a terrible curse and reproach, a shameful thing, as indicated in Numbers 5:28. There we are told that if the wife were proved innocent, she would then conceive. It was suggested by some of the ancient Jewish writers that adultery was more prevalent among wives, because they thought that the multiplicity of lovers would increase the probability of conception. And, if they were able to conceive and bear children, people would look upon them as being blessed of God. That notion would tend to stir a little jealousy in a man, especially if his other wives were barren.

If a woman’s husband became suspicious of her fidelity, if he was jealous for her, God ordained this strange law for his use. It was not necessary that she be caught in the act of adultery, or that she be guilty of it. All that was necessary was that her husband be jealous. If in his mind there was but the suspicion of infidelity, this test, this law was to be applied (Numbers 5:12-14).

The test did not involve being put on trial in a court of law. That would only take place if the woman were caught in the act of adultery. In that case the result was capital punishment for both the woman and the man with whom she had committed adultery (Leviticus 20:10).

If a man was suspicious of his wife, she was to be brought to the priest with an offering (v.15). The offering was to be supplied by the husband, but it was her offering. This offering was unique. The offering was to be the tenth part of an ephah of barley, which was the same as an omer, about 3 1/2 quarts of dry measure or about 1/10 of a bushel. The offering was carried in an earthen vessel. And the woman had to hold this weight while she was being tested. You can imagine how heavy the offering was as she held it out in her hands. It was designed to make her weary and perhaps, bring about a confession of guilt.

The Offering

Everything about the offering was significant. It was not an offering that was designated to expiate, or remove, or transfer sin. The amount of barley meal was the same as the daily ration of manna for one person, the same measure used in the meal or meat offering. But, unlike the meal offering, this offering had no fine flour, or oil, or frankincense, all of which pointed to the righteousness of Christ, the work of the Spirit and the sweet smelling savour of the grace of God. Fine flour was the food of the priests. Barley was the food of the beast. The earthen vessel was a vessel of dishonour, a common vessel, used only for a time and then discarded. Every element of the offering was designed to cause the woman to remember her sin and iniquity (Numbers 5:15). This was a jealousy offering, and it showed the effects of suspicion. The woman was suspected of the common, beastly, and dishonourable act of adultery. Therefore the offering was an offering of barley meal. And the offering was provided by her husband. It was her offering; but it was provided by her husband.

The priest was required to take holy water (water from the laver of brass), mix it in the earthen vessel with dirt from the floor of the tabernacle, and pronounce the curse upon the woman (Numbers 5:19-22). The ramifications of the curse were contingent upon her being proved guilty. The curse was declared to the woman; and she was required to agree to it, verifying her understanding of the charges laid against her. After hearing the curse, she would reply, ‘Amen, amen’ (Numbers 5:22). By doing so she was saying that she understood the charges against her, agreed to the curse, and was ready to be tested. She was saying that when she drank the bitter water, if it became bitter in her stomach and caused her stomach to swell and she became ill and began to corrupt, that she was guilty as charged and would be shunned the rest of her days.

Then the priest wrote the charges, the indictment of suspicion, on a piece of parchment and took the water mixed with the dirt and blotted out the indictment, so that the ink from the
indictment would be mixed with the water and dirt. The brew that was in the earthen vessel was water, dirt from the floor of the tabernacle, and blottings from the parchment upon which her indictment was written. This strange concoction was designed only to reveal whether she was guilty or not guilty of adultery. It searched her from within and made manifest her guilt or innocence.

**A Gospel Type**

Because the mixture had nothing toxic or poisonous in it, and could only discern what was inside the woman, the test was a miraculous thing and should be viewed as such. Paul said in 1 Corinthians 10 that these things happened in Israel to be typical, typical of Gospel matters. In this Gospel age God judges the secrets of all hearts by Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest of our profession, by the Gospel. As is all the law, the Book of Numbers is about the Church, Christ's bride, in our relationship with Christ our Husband. What's this all about?

Remember, only the wife could be suspected of adultery. No law was given concerning the possibility of the husband's infidelity. Had God intended for us to look upon this law as relating to the natural affairs of the heart, neither the wife nor the husband would have need of testing. Both were, as we all are, adulterers by nature (Matthew 15:19; Mark 7:21).

The law is, in its entirety, spiritual. It is all about Christ, His person and His accomplished work for His people. The husband was not suspected, because this, of course, points to the fact that Christ is without sin. He is our ever faithful Husband, whose name is Faithful and True. Any problem that results in a damaged relationship between Christ and His church must be laid at our door, never His. No hint of suspicion can ever be put to the immutable Christ. He, who never lies, who cannot lie, loves His bride unconditionally. He will never leave her nor forsake her. He is with her always. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. He loves her with an everlasting love and lives to intercede for her. If a possibility of suspicion, if any hint of unfaithfulness exists, it can only be with the bride, not with Christ.

Christ is jealous for His glory and jealous for His bride. He will countenance no rival to her affection for Him. The emotion of jealousy has to do with entitlement. On a human level, people get jealous because they believe that they are singularly entitled to the affection of the one they love. Even the slightest understanding of our corruption, depravity, and unworthiness should dispel such notions of entitlement. Human jealousy is groundless. No human being is worthy of, much less entitled to be jealous. Christ, on the other hand, has both claim and right to the unconditional affection and allegiance of those He loves. He says, 'Give me thine heart;' and He is entitled to it, because He is worthy. He has a right to be jealous, because He is entitled.

**Cause for Suspicion**

We must acknowledge that we often – dare I say, constantly – give our Saviour, our completely devoted Husband, cause for jealousy. Do we not? The believer’s love for Christ is genuine. We say with Peter, ‘Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee.’ ‘We love him, because he first loved us.’

Yes, we love our Redeemer, who loved us and gave Himself for us. Yet, our base, corrupt, evil hearts are ever straying from Him! How often we go a-whoring after others!
The cares of the world often get in the way of the unrivalled love we owe our Beloved. Our minds may wander from Christ and become focused on petty differences between the brethren. We sometimes isolate ourselves (individually and as a body of believers) from fellowship with others of like precious faith over perceived issues. We often become proud and self sufficient, and leave our first love, like the church at Laodicea. God’s church sometimes allows the presence of false teachings, like the church at Pergamos. Sometimes she allows the doctrine of Balaam to enter in, as well as the doctrine of the Nicolaitans. She struggles with schisms, like the church at Corinth. Yes, the church of God, Christ’s chosen, redeemed, dearly beloved bride often gives reason to be suspected of an alienation of affection. To be suspicious of her would be both feasible and reasonable. The possibility of her being untrue is always at the surface.

The Test
How can the inner thoughts of our hearts be known? We must be proved. We must be tested. We must be tried. We must be searched from within. We must drink the water mixed with dust and the blottings of the accusation. 

The three elements of the potion in Numbers 5 were dust from the floor of the tabernacle, holy water, and ink from the indictment written against the wife. These elements are significant. The dust represents death. The water represents the Word of God, the Gospel. The indictment represents the law. The dust and the indictment are in the water. And the very law of the indictment is the means by which the indictment is blotted out (Romans 3:24-28; Isaiah 45:20).

The Gospel of Christ sets forth the death of Christ as the Substitute for sinners condemned by the law. The Gospel is the food and drink of the church. It is the feast of fat things, wine upon the lees and well refined. It is the singular drink for both the one who is true and the one who is unfaithful. It is the drink that reveals both.

It is the Gospel that searches the inward man, where God requires truth. To the one who is guilty of unfaithfulness and drinks, the Gospel searches him out, finds, and discloses his unfaithfulness. The drink of death searches out the faithful, too, and gives him freedom to bring forth fruit unto God. The fact is, there is in our hearts both faithfulness and adultery. We must be tried by the Word. We must have a constant diet of the Gospel. The preaching of the Gospel is the only thing that will search us out. (See: Hebrews 4:12-13; Ephesians 5:8-13; John 3:19-21; Psalms 139:23–24).

The offering that was brought was barley, the food of beasts. This is a picture of the believer approaching God with nothing of value. It speaks to the fact that the believer stands before God trusting Him to reveal the truth about him. ‘Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.’

The barley also pictures the Gospel in that it is the food of beasts. The Gospel is for sinners. Christ came not to call the righteous, but to bring sinners to repentance. ‘This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.’

When the church is tried by the Gospel, she is always found innocent. When she feasts on the Gospel and is searched in her inmost self, she is found without sin, because the Gospel declares that her sin is gone. She is sanctified. She is made the very righteousness of God. Fully aware of her personal guilt, rottenness, and swelling within, she clings to Christ all the more, knowing that He is her All. The indictment that was against us has been blotted out by the precious blood of Christ (Romans 8:1, 33-34).

Death and the law are both elements of Gospel preaching, and both are swallowed up by it. The Gospel is a heavenly cordial that inebriates the soul and causes the bride to rejoice that though she may be suspect in herself, because of her Bridegroom, she is not guilty. She welcomes the test; she gladly drinks the potion heartily and often, for it will prove her always innocent. Though within her flesh she knows that there dwells no good thing, she knows, by Gospel declaration, that she is truly her Beloved’s, that she is true to Him, and that He will never put her away. Because He declares, ‘I am jealous for her,’ nothing shall separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord (Hosea 2:19-20; Jeremiah 32:38-40).

Pastor Don Fortner is making a rare visit to the UK in April.

We encourage all who are able, to attend the preaching services.

DON FORTNER’S ITINERARY

see page 24

or call 01833 650797 for details.
Blaspheming against God

Isaiah’s words above form part of the exciting story in Isaiah chapters 36 and 37 about the overthrow of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, who had threatened to take Jerusalem as part of a bigger invasion of the Ancient Near East. This story is just as exciting as the battle between David and Goliath. Yet it is more miraculous and it is to be wondered that more children’s lessons are not based upon it as it is so faith-building and historically precise.

Sennacherib had previously brought a very powerful army of 200,000 hardened soldiers into Judea and conquered everywhere he went (2 Kings 18:13-16; 2 Chronicles 32:1-8; Isaiah 22, 24, 29). In his own annals he claimed to have taken 46 of King Hezekiah’s walled cities, abducting over 200,000 people as slaves. When Hezekiah sought aid from Egypt (a mistake, 2 Kings 18:20-24), Sennacherib came again to Judea (2 Kings 18:17, 37, 19:1; 2 Chronicles 32:9-23; Isaiah 36). Hezekiah, in desperation, prayed fervently (but concisely) to the Lord, spreading out Sennacherib’s threats before God in the temple. The import of his speech is that the Lord God were the bodies of the soldiers — all dead. So Sennacherib king of Assyria departed and went away. He returned home, and remained at Nineveh, never to attack Jerusalem again. He was murdered by his own sons 20 years later (Isaiah 37:36-38).

Such was God’s awful judgment on Sennacherib’s blasphemy.

What is blasphemy?

Blasphemy is speaking dishonourably, profanely, or wickedly about God. It is spurning Him or holding Him up to contempt (Psalms 74:18; Isaiah 52:5; Romans 2:24; Revelation 13:1,6, 16:9, 11, 21). Denying that Jesus is the Messiah and speaking wickedly about Him is blasphemy (Luke 22:65). Attributing God’s power and grace to Satan is blasphemy the Holy Spirit (Matthew 12:31-32 Mark 3:28-29; Luke 12:10). Blasphemy is a serious matter punishable by death under the Mosaic Law (Leviticus 24:11-16; John 10:33).

But what was the blasphemy of Assyria? Sennacherib had sent messengers to Hezekiah with a view to persuade him to surrender. The terms were alluring and the danger of ignoring them grave. The key messenger was the Rabshakeh, or Sennacherib’s chief of staff and his words to Hezekiah can be read in Isaiah 36. The import of his speech is that the Lord God...
could not deliver Jerusalem out of Sennacherib’s hands. The Lord was put on a level with the idols and pagan gods of the towns that had been utterly defeated. Just as the heathen cities in Samaria had been defeated, Jerusalem would fall under Assyrian arms since God was powerless to defend them.

_Beware_ lest Hezekiah persuade you, saying, The LORD will deliver us. Hath any of the gods of the nations delivered his land out of the hand of the king of Assyria? Where are the gods of Hamath and Arphad? where are the gods of Seprarvaim? and have they delivered Samaria out of my hand? Who are they among all the gods of these lands, that have delivered their land out of my hand, that the LORD should deliver Jerusalem out of my hand? Isaiah 36:18-20

The essence of the blasphemy was that God had no power; that His arm was too short and could not save; that man was more powerful than God and that God could not deliver those He had called and loved. This is termed blasphemy by God Himself through Isaiah.

**Evangelicals must take note**

If it is blasphemy to deny God’s power to save or to state that God has people He loves who are not delivered, then portions of the evangelical church should tremble.

It is common practice today to speak exactly like this in the presentation of the Gospel. Preachers with foundations in Evangelical Arminianism, Fullerism, Amyraldianism and those who claim to be Four-Point Calvinists and teach a genuine free-offer of the gospel, all commit this sin.

**How do they do this?**

The essential platform of these false theological systems all propose the following:

- God loves everyone.
- God wants everyone to repent.
- Jesus died for everyone.
- Absolutely anyone at all can come to Christ at any time and be saved.
- Some part of God’s grace reaches out to all men.

However, since it is clear that all men do not respond to the Gospel, ways have to be found to solve the problem this causes.

**What are these ways?**

**Arminians** teach that man can reject the offer of the Gospel. The cause of condemnation is the free-will choice of man. God has provided everything for salvation, Jesus died for everyone, but grace is resisted and rejected. Arminianism teaches man is more powerful than God. God wants all men to repent but many simply refuse. God wills the salvation of all, but in many cases man’s will is stronger. This system sets the will of God the Son against the will of God the Father.

**Amyraldians** also teach the atonement is universal. However, fallen men will not choose God so God effectually calls some and gives them, in particular, grace to believe. Conversion is particular (the decree of election) but atonement is universal (Christ died for all men). Amyraldianism teaches a complete contradiction in God. Again, God wants to save everyone but does not. This system sets the will of God the Holy Spirit against the will of God the Father.

**Fullerites** teaches something very similar to Amyraldians but with more dangerous overtones. In Fullerism God loves everyone and Jesus died
for all sin abstractly. Man simply has to improve his condition by obeying the law and being strengthened by the moral example of Christ on the cross. Jesus was not made sin for us and we do not receive His righteousness since it is not transferable. We do not need it anyway since Adam’s sin was also not transferred to us. Our sins are our crimes, and these are forgiven as we obey the universal, natural (un-revealed) law. Fullerism is guilty of many serious errors and is a complex system that cannot be fully evaluated here. In it men are condemned because they did not improve their own condition, did not respond obediently to the Gospel by their own power.

The ‘consistent’ free-offer teaches that God loves everyone, Jesus died for everyone and anyone who hears the Gospel can respond immediately and be saved. It claims the atonement is, therefore, universal (at least by implication, though some deny this and hence their position is contradictory). Free-offer preaching denies, in practice, the decree of election because the Gospel preached is universalistic (all can come). Some free-offer advocates believe in election and claim that those who do not repent are not elect. Thus they are in two minds and effectively lie to the non-elect to whom they preach. In this they are Amyraldian.

A very serious matter
All preachers in these systems misrepresent God in various ways.

They lie to their hearers in saying that anyone can respond to the Gospel and be saved when the truth is that only those whom God has chosen and draws by grace can respond to the Gospel (John 6:44, 65). Only those given faith and repentance can be converted (Ephesians 2:1-10).

They lie in saying that Jesus died for every man when He died only for His own people, the people the Father gave to Him (John 17:2, 6, 9, 12, 24). These are also the only people He prays for, He never prays for the world (John 17:9).

They lie in saying that God loves everyone, ignoring the multitude of texts that show God does not love all, and never has loved the reprobate wicked (e.g. Leviticus 20:23; Psalms 5:5. 11:5; Proverbs 22:14; Zechariah 11:8; Romans 9:13).

They lie in claiming that there is some sort of grace (different systems have different ideas about it) that touches every person and that man can respond to this amorphous, universal or common grace without divine aid. In fact, God’s grace is in Christ and comes from the cross and is applied to the elect, never to the wicked.

Highest Blasphemy
But the worst lie is the impression given to the world that God is not all-powerful. He wants to save all, He sent Jesus to die for all, but all do not get saved. He loves all, but this is often spurned. This means that God does not have the power to achieve something He desperately wants. God cannot fulfil His own will. He wills all to repent but most then ignore Him. This is blasphemy by God’s own definition in Isaiah. Men who teach that God is not powerful enough to achieve His own will or to save those He loves are blaspheming God’s name. This is a simple statement of Biblical facts.

We cannot get around this. We cannot avoid the clear Biblical logic. To demean God by teaching that His arm is too short to save those whom He wants to save is blasphemy!

We realise that this is a hard word, but the truth of the current situation must be explained to the Lord’s people so that those who wish to genuinely obey God and honour His word can understand the issues at stake. It is the blasphemy of Rabshakeh and it is God’s glory that is being profaned.

May God make us wise.
When the apostle says that all things work together for our good, he means that all things are beneficial for us, all things work for our well-being. Accordingly, all things lead to a good end. However, the apostle does not speak of earthly good. This is not the real good. Good is not that we are successful, that we prosper in earthly goods. The mere fact that a man prospers and is successful is not the real good. To the contrary, death hangs over all the earthly good. It is not possible that all things work for good in this world. Instead, the apostle is speaking of the good of which he had been speaking in the preceding context. He is speaking of the glory of the people of God, of the glory that shall be revealed in them. He is speaking of their glorious liberty. This final glory, when the people of God will become heirs of all things, is the good that is in view.

What we must notice is that the apostle says all things: “All things work together for good.” This is all-comprehensive. Included are all things that God has made from the beginning, in heaven and on earth. The angels in heaven, principalities, and powers are included. The angels that have fallen are included in the statement. When we turn to the earthly creation, we can take all things in the widest sense: the stars in the heavens, sun and moon, the brute creature, trees and plants, and also the living creature.

Although having all these things in mind, so that he means sickness or health, sorrow or joy, prosperity or depression, nevertheless, the apostle wishes to emphasize the evil things. He wishes to emphasize those things that appear evil to us. This is evident from the fact that it is not so much a question in our mind that good things work for our good, but the question is whether evil things work for our good. That all things refer especially to evil things is also evident from the context, in which the apostle speaks of the sufferings of this present time. He says especially these sufferings work for good.
We notice that the apostle says that all things work, and that they work together. Did you ever notice that everything in God’s creation works? It is not only the rational creatures who work. Everything works. Things have never stood still since God made them. Sun, moon, and stars are working agents. Trees, plants, rivers, and streams are working agents. The clouds in the heavens are working agents. The soil itself works. It produces something. So it is with the rational creatures. Men always work. All things work. Nothing is at a standstill. If we could look even into a grain of sand, we would find that in it things are working.

Not only do all things work, but all things work so that they accomplish something. Things are not simply moving in space, but they are going somewhere. Things work together, that is, things do not work to gain their own end. Each thing does not do its own work. They work together. They all work one work. They all have the same object in view. Every one of God’s creatures, each one in its own place, works together to one purpose. That one purpose is the glory of God. The roaring lion in the forest and the little germ that creeps into your lungs work together. Sun, moon, and stars—all things work, and they work together. In many cases, they do not know this. Sometimes they do not want this. It is not the devil’s purpose to work for the good of God’s people. Nevertheless, he does.

All things work because God works through them. If God would stop working, nothing would work. But God works. He works in everything. God works for His own purpose, which is the glory of His people. Therefore, all things work for the glorious manifestation of the children of God.

We do not see this. We sometimes see little snapshots of it. We see it when the devil went to paradise. He did not go there for the purpose of bringing to manifestation the glory of Christ and His church, but this is what he did. So it is frequently. When the sons of Jacob sold Joseph into Egypt, it was not their purpose to seek the glory of Joseph and to keep a large number of people alive, but they worked together. We see this especially in the cross. When Pilate, the Jewish Sanhedrin, and the wicked world conspired against Jesus to crucify Him, it was not their purpose to bring about the salvation of God’s people, but this is what they did. So it is with the things that affect us. The way sometimes seems dark and gloomy. God does things we think are foolish. And yet, how often do we not see it, when God leads His people in dark ways, that His people strike the roots of faith deeper into the Lord.
The Father of Modern Biblical Scholarship

John Albert Bengel

(1687-1752)

Part Two:

Bengel’s Works

A light placed under a bushel
Throughout the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Bengel was renowned in the English-speaking world as a fine Christian scholar who ably defended the historicity, authenticity and reliability of the Word of God. This was at a time when Latitudinarians¹ and Rationalists² were joining hands in seeking to undermine the uniqueness of Scripture in determining the Christian faith. Though Bengel’s pioneer work in sound Biblical scholarship would still head modern research, his high reputation faded last century and his teaching was ignored. The various reasons for this must be considered. Nowadays, text-critical research³ is treated with suspicion by English-speaking, Bible-believing scholars. Such work is usually left to the Liberals. We need only think of England’s own James Ussher (1581-1656), John Owen (1616-1686) and John Gill (1697-1771). These men are rightly remembered for their devotion to the Word of God, but in their historical and linguistic work Ussher on Biblical dating, Owen on the development of the Hebrew language and Gill on sound shifts and Hebrew vocalisation are even ridiculed. Such research, however, ought to go hand in hand with sound exegesis. Instead of building on their foundations, we have let their work fall to ruins.

One major reason for this neglect is political rather than theological. The twentieth century was a time when most English-speaking countries, for obvious reasons, looked askance at Germany. Thus negative reports from that country were often cultivated to the exclusion of positive accounts coming from the German churches. In the sphere of textual criticism, rationalistic German studies...
such as those of Johann Gottfried Eichhorn (1752-1841) and Ferdinand Christian Bauer (1762-1860), though denounced from German pietistic and Reformed pulpits, were presented to the English-speaking churches as epitomes of 'enemy thinking'. Textual criticism was then seen as 'German', anti-Christian, and thus taboo. It was little known that at the time of Eichhorn and Bauer, German evangelicals such as Krummacher and Oncken were denouncing their own Liberals for taking over 'English' Arminianism and the un-Biblical scholarship which goes with it. Schleiermacher, for instance, was ridiculed for being a protagonist of English Wesleyan subjectivism. Thus, when at a London Bible College during the late fifties and early sixties, we were told much about the dangers of German text criticism and nothing about the fine Biblical work of John Albert Bengel. Doing post-graduate work under Prof. James Atkinson at Hull University, I learned to view the Scriptures objectively without fear of either the Liberals or the narrow-mindedness that so often accompanies over-protective Evangelicalism.

The truth is that source criticism did not begin with the upsurge of rationalism, nor were Eichhorn and Bauer, as claimed in many a modern 'evangelical' theological dictionary, its pioneers. William J. Cameron’s entry on New Testament criticism in Baker’s Dictionary of Theology is typical of such faulty thinking. Cameron even claims that Eichhorn published the first critical introduction to the New Testament in 1804, not only ignoring Bengel’s publications of sixty years before but also the work of Beza (France and Geneva), Elzevir, von Mastricht and P. Wetstein (Netherlands), Walton, Fell, Mill and Bentley (England), Frey and J. J. Wetstein (Switzerland) and Küster, Haffenreffer and Wolf (Germany). These scholars produced text-critical works throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries which greatly outclassed nineteenth century Eichhorn’s. Bengel built on the best of their research.

Eichhorn’s work was considered insignificant by German churches and most academics in comparison to that of Bengel who had built on scholarly traditions dating back to the establishment of the Biblical canon. Unlike Eichhorn and Bauer, whose post-Bengel text-critical work was indeed built on premises gained from rationalism and the so-called Enlightenment, nineteenth century Anti-rationalists such as Keil, Delitsch, Hengstenberg and Tholuch continued the methods pioneered by Spener, Franke and Bengel. In doing so, they demonstrated Biblical truths at a far higher academic level than the Rationalists. So, traditionally and historically speaking, textual criticism has been in the hands of believers from earliest times and it was Bible-believing scholars such as Bengel who made such studies understandable and acceptable both to scholars in their research and the common man in his daily witness.

Another reason why Bengel has ceased to influence Reformed, English-speaking believers is certainly because of his presumed association with John Wesley (1703-1781). It is a matter of ‘condemnation by association’ which plays such a large part in unscholarly ‘evangelical gossip’. In Bengel’s case, it is argued that Wesley was an Arminian sceptic who often quoted Bengel and thus Bengel must have been an Arminian sceptic. The truth is that Wesley provided poor believers with an extensive library of world classics in a very cheap and easily read form. He took great liberties in his editing and translation work to this end but such ‘easy readers’ were pearls in the hands of a public who could otherwise not afford any books at all. In 1755, Wesley translated Bengel’s best known work Gnomon, a Greek word referring to a piece of knowledge given as a rule for life. Actually, it was one of the best things Wesley ever did, but many staunch Calvinists still view the book, which they cannot possibly have read, as a kind of Arminian Old Moore’s Almanac.

New Liberalism far more dangerous that Bauer’s theories

Sadly, our English-speaking churches continue to ignore the importance of sound Biblical studies. They thus stand helpless and defenceless
before the modern Liberalism rampant in our nominally Reformed circles. The old Liberalism of Bauer was built on the idea that the Scriptures evolved through various versions of Christianity which were at loggerheads with one another. He postulated, without historical evidence, that Peter and Paul, because of their allegedly different gospels, gave rise to different texts of Scriptures which reflect these differences. Bauer believed that the earlier the texts, the greater the differences but in time the two schools merged and unified their faith and the resulting texts were artificially combined. Thus we can date the authenticity of the earliest Biblical texts by their many contradictions. Modern Liberals disguised as ‘Moderate Calvinists’ still speak of contradicting strands in the early manuscripts or ‘received texts’ and have departed from the Authorised Version which does not back up their arbitrary interpretation. They go a step further than the alleged Peter and Paul controversy of Bauer and speak of a Father, Son and Holy Spirit controversy and a Bible which reflects these conflicts. They reject the unity of the Trinity and postulate three separate gospels, one concerning the independent will of Christ, one displaying the volitional will of the Father and one which refers to His decretal will. The Holy Spirit is seen as the author of confusion, producing texts which reflect the various irreconcilable interpretations of the Godhead. Furthermore, these Liberals deny that God’s decrees play any part in the gospel to be preached to sinners and reserve such preaching for saints only. In this, according to Bengel, they show they are mere Rationalists as “if ever the doctrine of decrees in general shall fall into disregard amongst ourselves, the majority of us will decline into what is no better than mere rationalism.” Bengel also taught that the mark of the slovenly scholar is that he forces one passage of Scripture to contradict another and then sits back thinking himself clever. Though our present Bible texts say much about the decrees of God, predestination and election, these Rationalists tell us not to preach about sovereign grace but about man’s responsibility and agency in salvation. Where they see that the Biblical manuscripts contradict such far-fetched, God-dishonouring views, they produce ‘alternative readings’ from less reliable texts or use their own fanatic imagination to hammer Scripture into the ‘well-meant’ shape they would have it. They reject older work on the received and restored texts and present invented texts of their own imagination. A new interest in the texts of the Bible would help to confound these purveyors of a make-believe gospel divorced from sound text-critical and hermeneutical principles.

From 1713 on, to protect his students against such harmful speculations, Bengel guided them through a two-year course on the entire Greek New Testament, comparing the great number of published critical editions with ancient manuscripts which he had collected. Much of this tuition was based on his Annotations, Additions and Animadversions on Hedinger’s Greek Testament of 1706. Before going too deeply into God’s Word, however, Bengel penned works on the character of God so that his students would understand Who authored the Scriptures. Outstanding amongst these was his paper On the Holiness of God and other expositions of the Hebrew kadosh and the Greek hagios (holy) which, he showed, reflected the entire attributes of God. Other works from this period were critical commentaries on the original Biblical texts, many of which grew out of his college work. Bengel was for a primarily literal interpretation of the Bible, rejecting the cabalistic teaching of his day which saw in every letter of Hebrew words some deep, mystical or occult meaning, commenting, “I know nothing of cabala, not of alphabetical mysteries, nor of influence in astrology, nor of angelic appearance.”

For his lecture preparation Bengel used his many connections abroad to search the libraries of Britain, Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, Switzerland, Russia, Hungary and the eastern states for...
hitherto unpublished documents which he realised must be there. Scholars from all over the world then pressed him to publish his findings. In April, 1725 Bengel announced his intention to produce a critical edition of the Greek Text on lines outlined in an essay with specimens named Prodromus Novi Testamenti Graeci and appealed for international cooperation in securing further manuscripts. This brought to light a large number of Greek, Latin, Coptic and Armenian texts, several of which were superior (more complete) to those used by former scholars such as John Mill. On hearing of Bengel’s work, a young Swiss scholar of Dutch extraction named John James Wetstein, decided to publish before him and solicited the aid of the English Mill school whose research, now led by Richard Bentley and Conyers Middleton, never saw publication. Wetstein, however, met with strong opposition by supporters of Bengel who claimed that the Swiss scholar was too speculative in his work. Wetstein’s professor John Lewis Frey, alarmed at what his protégé was doing but also angry that he was not being given due honour in the proceedings, moved Basle university to refuse Wetstein permission to publish his edition. The grounds given were that it was a useless, uncalled for and even dangerous endeavour. Nevertheless, Frey and Iselin of Basle supplied Bengel with ancient manuscripts preserved by the university. In 1729, Bengel presented his completed critical text to the Stuttgart and Tübingen censorship committee along with his work Apparatus Criticus and received their approbation. However, he determined to scrutinise all Wetstein’s sources and arguments before finally going to the printers. Bengel’s Apparatus Criticus, which gave an account of all the readings he had adopted, came out in 1734. The work is divided into three parts. The first deals with what New Testament criticism is and why it is necessary, and also features a historical overview of the science from earliest times. The second part deals with an overview of the means used to ascertain the value of the various manuscripts with their individual characteristics. The third part lists all the various readings with arguments for and against. Bengel included a special section on Revelation which had been neglected through lack of interest in the book by former Biblical scholars. In the same year Bengel published his octavo Greek New Testament with an introduction explaining his methods of research. In 1736, Bengel’s Harmony of the Gospels appeared which was followed in 1740 by his Exposition of the Revelation of St. John. Bengel felt a real call to produce the latter work (the first of several on the subject) as, save for Bullinger, most Reformers had neglected or even rejected Revelation.

Though scholarly and pastoral reception to Bengel’s works was mostly positive, some hyper-conservative critics censored Bengel for the ‘un-
precedent audacity’ of analysing the divine Word. They were at first troubled by the idea that manuscripts existed with alternative readings but overcame the problem rationally by arguing that God had included the variants in His word so that they would speak to different people in their various needs. Others criticised Bengel for not adapting his views to meet the more radical diversions in some texts. Wetstein, Bengel’s main rival, first magnanimously pronounced Bengel’s work to be ‘the best edition that had ever been printed,’ but became more critical as the edition became popular amongst scholars. The Dutch called for Bengel’s German works to be translated into Latin so that they could be distributed internationally. Count Zinzendorf helped greatly in their circulation which probably attracted Wesley’s attention to Bengel. Zinzendorf called Bengel ‘the prophet of this age’ but told him that Lutheranism was dead and he should leave his church commitments and join the United Brethren. Bengel was not impressed by the suggestion. The German mission to India at Tranquebar welcomed Bengel’s work as it assisted them greatly in their task of translating the Bible and bringing the gospel to people who had been strangers to it. Bengel was delighted by any report that the gospel was reaching the uttermost parts of the earth. This is why, in spite of his disagreement with Zinzendorf’s idea of a ‘pure church’, he supported the missionary enterprises of the United Brethren.

Strong criticism came from friends of Erasmus who pointed out that Bengel had introduced a number of readings absent from Erasmus’ Greek New Testament. Bengel explained that that Erasmus work was a rushed job and where Erasmus had no Greek texts such as in his work on the Apocalypse, he had translated from the Latin Bible into Greek and published that as the true, ancient text. At this, the Roman Catholics became even more angry because they saw Bengel’s criticism of Erasmus, which they had provoked, as a criticism of Roman Catholic reliance on Latin texts. So, too, there was some opposition in the Lutheran churches because Bengel had indirectly criticised the manuscripts Luther had used. This reserve concerning the Luther Bible was shared by the Swiss Reformed churches who had produced a Bible in High German some years before Luther. The latter claimed that his Bible was the best as the Zürich Bible was translated by heretics. This was neither a scholarly nor Christian argument. Not wishing to denounce either Luther or Bengel, the Lutheran Church produced a new edition of Luther’s work but with Bengel’s notes and expositions.

Gnomen
The work for which Begel is best known outside of Germany is his Gnomen which came out in 1742. My 1855 edition runs to 1,106 pages and is a must for any expository pastor. It is a verse by verse analysis of the Greek text throughout the entire New Testament and is a mine of information for pastors who prefer the expository method of preaching. Bengel’s motive in bringing out his Gnomen, as explained in his Preface, was to set forth the majesty, simplicity, unsearchable depths, conciseness, comprehensiveness and practical use of God’s Word. His main rule in his exegesis was that Scripture should be interpreted by Scripture and texts should not be isolated from the rest of Scripture as a basis for doctrine. Hengstenberg’s Evangelical Church Chronicle reviewed the work as:

... a rare performance of the kind, concise, original, vigorous, eloquent, and sprightly; it is an erudite exposition, delivered in a

“Scripture is the foundation of the Church: the Church is the guardian of Scripture. When the Church is in strong health, the light of Scripture shines bright; when the church is sick, Scripture is corroded by neglect; and thus it happens, that the outward form of Scripture and that of the Church, usually seems to exhibit simultaneously either health or else sickness; and as a rule the way in which Scripture is being treated is in exact correspondence with the condition of the Church.”

Bengel
spirit of fervent Christian love. It evinces the deepest reverence for the sacred text, and a most profound acquaintance with its contents. With remarkable simplicity and humility it follows the drift of the inspired meaning, and induces the soul to open itself, even to the softest of those breathings of the Holy Ghost, which pervade the written word. Its full but artless description in the title-page, bespeaks the true tenor and spirit of the work. A plenitude of sound knowledge, hallowed and animated by deep piety, here sheds itself over the very words of Scripture, and serves to elicit from every part of it the inherent glow of its interior divine illumination.

Wesley's 1755 edition of Bengel's Gnomon, re-titled Expository Notes upon the New Testament, is not a direct translation, although it contains a good number of Bengel's lengthier exegeses. In his Preface, Wesley explains that he wished to prepare a similar work himself but found he could not better 'that great luminary of the Christian world'. Much of Bengel, including all his critical, textual work is omitted and much is abridged and given in Wesley's words. So, too, other works by Bengel are merged into Wesley's production. A good number of German works also dealt with the Gnomon in the same way.

Most helpful for the church member who has no academic training but is able to witness orally and in writing are Bengel's Testimony of Truth (1748); On the Right Way of Handling Divine Subjects (1750) and A Vindication of the Holy Scriptures (1755). The sum of advice in these works is given by Bengel as:

1. The Holy Scriptures are the sole repertory of that complete system of truth which man, as a being appointed to obtain everlasting salvation, needs to be acquainted with.
2. That every, even the minutest, Scripture detail has its importance in the structure of revealed truth; and natural reason has often the power of seeing and tracing that importance, but never the power of choosing or rejecting any such matter at pleasure.
3. That the expositor who nullifies the historical groundwork of Scripture for the sake of finding only spiritual truths everywhere, certainly brings death upon all correct interpretation.
4. That the Scriptures best illustrate and corroborate themselves; consequently, those expositions are the safest which keep closest to the text.
5. That the whole power and glory of the inspired writings can be known only to the honest, devout, and believing inquirer.

6. That much in Scripture is found to stretch far beyond the confines of reason's natural light, and far beyond even our symbolic books (creeds). Still, whatever of the kind is evidently declared in Scripture, ought to be received as a part of the system of divine truth, notwithstanding all reputed philosophy, and all reputedly orthodox theology. On the other hand, every theological notion, which is not evidently deducible from Holy Scripture, ought to be regarded with religious suspicion and caution.

Conclusion
Sadly, in Reformed circles, the idea is prevalent that the 'Big Names' know best and thus church members bow themselves to whatever new ideas come from the magazines, para-church organisations and conferences led by these prominent personalities. They humbly believe that such 'Big Names' have studied the Scriptures and Church History and must know what they are talking about! The fact is that a huge percent of such 'Big Names' have climbed up evangelical ladders as career-men and fighters for their legal rights rather than as pastors and soul-ministers. The most verbose of them have left destroyed or broken churches in their erratic wake. They view their present organisations as commercial enterprises founded to place people under the influence of their modern thought. They are the Reformed version of Willow Creek. They are Liberals and opportunists who apparently know their Bibles and the history of the Church far less than the so-called ordinary man in the pew. Nevertheless, they are remarkably competent in pulling the wool over gullible people's eyes and making them believe in their rational scepticism that the Father and Son have different wills and that the Scriptures have self-contradictory sources. It is high time that every humble believer in the churches became a Bengel in his own right and confronted and confuted these blind leaders with Biblical truths.

(Footnotes)
1 Those who extended their religious beliefs to include ideas outside the latitude of strict Biblical teaching. The movement developed into cold moralism and a faulty interpretation of basic Christian doctrines, especially the atonement, sin and grace.
2 The idea that human reason alone can eventually solve all human problems. Rationalists who still called themselves Christians such as Gotthold Ephraim Lessing (1729-1781), taught that eighteenth century reason was the Spirit promised by Christ.
3 Often called 'lower criticism' or 'textual criticism', referring to the comparative study of Biblical documents. After determining the background and origin, scholars then proceed to the so-called 'higher criticism' or 'literary criticism', dealing with the contents and messages of the text.
4 Hence the German name for Gnomon became Zeigerfinger (indicator, index finger).
5 Burk, p. 212.
6 Quoted in Burk's Life and Writings of Bengel, p. 9.
7 See especially his Sixty Practical Addresses on the Apocalypse of 1747.
8 Burk, p. 263.
Several friends have written to me during the last few years to tell me that their views of the Old Testament, of Law and Gospel, of the Covenant of Grace, of the Church and of the Person of Christ have been radically altered by the teaching of Fred Zaspel and John Reisinger. A few have turned judgemental and in their new enthusiasm for this new teaching, they have scolded me for keeping to old Reformed patterns of doctrine, exegesis and hermeneutics and have discontinued fellowship. Such disciples are far stricter than their mentors as both Reisinger and Zaspel invite constructive criticism and have altered, if not corrected, their views openly since the late nineteen-nineties. Indeed, they call their own views ‘elastic’. New Covenant Theology (NCT) off-shoots have also emerged with whom Zaspel, Reisinger and others to be mentioned in this series remain in dialogue seeking mutual solutions. This means, however, that any dialogue with the NCT has become like a dialogue with a piece of wet modelling clay as one never knows what shape they might drop into next.

A new character of thinking
In his booklet New Covenant Theology and the Mosaic Law, Fred Zaspel describes the idea behind the term New Covenant as the ‘new character’ of covenant thinking inaugurated by Christ. He claims that NCT stands midway between the two extremes of Covenant Theology and Dispensational Theology. Covenant Theology, according to Zaspel, emphasises the covenants of redemption, works and grace and thus tends ‘to carry the old order into the new’ with the law of the old covenant still binding on the new. In Dispensational Theology, Zaspel argues, the changes and differences between the old and new economies or dispensations are stressed and the law is seen as irrelevant to the covenant believer. New Covenant Theology, Zaspel urges, is centred on Matthew 5:17-20 where Christ says, ‘I am not come to destroy but to fulfil’. Zaspel thus sees Jesus as a new Moses and a new Lawgiver who is greater than Moses. The new law of Jesus contains what Zaspel calls ‘eschatological transcendence’ over the old and is to be found in His commandments and sayings, (Matthew 5:18-20). Zaspel then goes on to argue that Christ does not merely correct the abuse of the law in Matthew 5 but ‘rescinds’ some laws, ‘restricts’ others and ‘extends the requirements’ of a third group. As Christ is greater than Moses and greater than the law, it is His prerogative to do with the law as ‘He feels fit’.

Giving words new meanings
Zaspel explains that we have misunderstood the word ‘destroy’ in Matthew 5:17. The word does not refer to a ‘tearing down’ or ‘disassembling’ of the law but that Christ ‘has not come to make it fail its intended design.’ This ‘intended design,’ Zaspel sees in what he calls the ‘eschatological realization of the law,’ that ‘brings about its intended and ultimate purpose.’ This, Zaspel explains, has nothing to do with the old Reformed idea that Christ came to obey the law on behalf of sinners. The old law lost its applicability when Christ came because it was both fulfilled and transcended eschatologically. We now live in the time of fulfilment and transcendence which Zaspel calls the time of the law of Christ. As we now have the ‘end’, we can dispense with the means to it. Moses, Zaspel tells us, has taken the back seat. We no longer ask what Moses says but what Christ says. Moses is the Type, Christ the Antitype. Zaspel says he is no Antinomian but explains that the shadow function of the law is past but the effect of it remains in Christ. Now, by obeying the fulfilled and transcended law ‘as interpreted by Jesus’, we receive a righteousness that surpasses that of the Scribes and Pharisees. Zaspel maintains that most Reformed writers have entirely missed the point concerning the purpose of the law and closes his booklet with the words:

Nowhere here is there any implication that Jesus came to merely ‘clarify’ or more fully explain Moses’ law. He did nothing of the kind. He came to ‘fulfil’ the law, to give it its final ‘filling up’. His teaching is a necessary advance ‘filling full’ that which awaited Him for precisely this purpose. In Jesus is found, indeed, a full and complete ‘definitive code of morality’. Without Him the old law has no relevance whatever, and the ‘filling’ which he gave it reflects and demands a degree of righteousness which Moses’ law only anticipated.
Are your alarm bells ringing?

Here, for an orthodox Christian, a number of alarm bells must be ringing. Zaspel leaves us in the dark as to which part of the law is rescinded, which is altered and which is extended. So, too, Zaspel’s New Covenant Theology reveals a radical break with Reformed theology in that it views the covenants of grace, redemption and works as having no part in the continuing revelation of both testaments. The New Covenanters’ claim to have discovered a ‘new character’ of theology is chiefly fostered by a rejection of orthodox Reformed terms such as ‘the covenant of grace’ and giving old terms new meanings. This is illustrated by Zaspel’s interpretation of Christ’s attitude to the law which appears to contradict Christ’s own words, ‘I am not come to destroy but to fulfil.’ In modern, and surely in Biblical parlance, ‘destroy’ means ‘to do away with utterly’. Yet Zaspel says he is not speaking of ‘destroying utterly’ any part of the law but of ‘rescinding’ it, which one would think was the same thing. My OED defines ‘rescind’ as ‘abrogate, annul, revoke, cancel’. Thus, the father of New Covenant Theology, John Reisinger tells us that the law and the Old Covenant, which he equates with the ‘Ten Commandments’, are ‘done away’ altogether.7 Zaspel claims that Christ’s words take on new meanings in the light of His fulfilment of the law. The old form is annulled and has been replaced by what Zaspel calls a new effect. By effect, Zaspel does not mean the condemning effect of the Mosaic law on sinners but the post-law transcendence with which Christ replaces it. Though with his doctrine of ‘transcendental eschatology’ Zaspel would gladly promise believers a new spirituality, all he really gives us is legal add-ons which create a new law, for believers. New Covenant teaching is thus basically New Law teaching, that is, a new development of Neonomianism.

Sound Biblical scholarship views Christ’s fulfilment of the law as including His own substitutive obedience to it as the federal Head of His Bride, the elect Church. Christ obeyed both the letter and the spirit of the law because part of His redemptive work was to bring in righteousness where man had none. In order to fulfil the law, Christ had to keep it in the very form and effect in which it was intended as a law which mankind had failed to keep. New Covenant leaders such as Zaspel and Reisinger merely stress nebulously what new, extended teaching Christ brought with Him. Their Christ did not thus fulfil the law in His own body; indeed, He rejected some parts, altered others and added more. This reminds us of Andrew Fuller’s teaching on the law in his chapter on Substitution which claims that Christ did not put Himself under the law but stood “above the law, deviating from the letter, but more than preserving the spirit of it.”8 This does not agree with Matthew 5:18 where Christ claims that not one jot or tittle of the law shall pass away. Furthermore, Christ speaks here of the vast importance of even the least of the law’s commandments. After all, Moses did not invent the law but was given it by the God of both Testaments. The law shows the eternal standard of Father, Son and Holy Ghost and is a description of the Divine character. As God is immutable, nothing can be added to or taken away from that character. So, too, the Apostles were diligent in quoting the Mosaic law as being still valid as we see in Romans 13:9. When Christ Himself takes up one of the Ten Commandments, it is not to rescind, restrict or extend it but to say what it means as in Matthew 5:27-28. Besides, in Matthew 5, Christ is not criticising the moral or spiritual state of Moses but that of the Scribes and Pharisees who externalised the law. Zaspel, however, so concentrates on the legal, literal aspect of his extended New Covenant law, that he is in danger of externalising it like the Scribes and Pharisees did the original Mosaic law. He is giving us New Covenant Traditions of the Elders. It is furthermore quite clear that Zaspel rejects the Mosaic law because he understands it purely as did the Scribes and Pharisees whom Christ condemned. Thus Tom Wells in his defence of NCT tells us, that it is probable that Jesus and the Ten Commandments do not agree in what they teach.9 Zaspel claims that we must look to the effect of the law rather than the form, but does not explain clearly what this effect is. We must therefore look to other writings of the New Covenant movement to see what they mean by ‘the effect’ or ‘new character’ of their ‘new law’.

(Footnotes)
1 Pages 2-3.
2 Pages 4-6.
3 Pages 13-14.
4 Pages 15-16.
5 Page 19.
6 Page 21.
7 Tablets of Stone, p. 86.
9 New Covenant Theology, p. 206.
The Bible teaches clearly that Christ came to save sinners (1 Timothy 1:15), that He laid down His life for His sheep (John 10:15) and that at the cross He bore their sins in His own body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24). This teaching regarding the substitutionary work of Christ in giving His life for the Church, in paying the debts of His people as sinners, in standing in their place under the outpouring of God’s wrath against their sins is known as “Particular Redemption.”

This work by William Rushton was originally published in 1831 and was written as a defence of the Biblical teaching of particular redemption. In it Rushton opposes the subtle teachings of Andrew Fuller, which sought to undermine such truth in veiled and confusing language.

Fundamental to Fuller’s teaching is a denial of the particular nature of the Atonement. Fuller’s ideas are often summarised by saying that Christ’s death is “sufficient for all, but efficient for those who believe”. Such an idea allows its advocates to present the gospel in a way that appears attractive to all by stating that Christ died for all. But the Bible teaches that God saves all whom He wills, Christ’s death being effectual for all those for whom He died. Essentially Fuller’s teaching removes the ‘offence of the cross’ because the particular nature of Christ’s work upon the cross is removed. Yet it is the particular, effectual, distinguishing nature of God’s grace in saving all those whom the Father gave to the Son from all eternity - and only those - which gives the preaching of the cross such power in the salvation of sinners.

“But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.” 1 Corinthians 1:23-24

Rushton’s work was originally written as four letters. The first sets out Fuller’s argument by quoting him extensively. The second then examines the argument. The third letter considers Fuller’s teaching in the light of the Biblical teaching of the Atonement. Finally the fourth letter presents a number of concluding arguments, and a witness to the consolation found in the truth of particular redemption by a number of the Lord’s servants in their dying testimonies - even, it seems, by Fuller himself. A prefix to the third letter provides a few helpful pages on the necessity of the Spirit’s power in order to see spiritual truths.
The author’s summary of the state of the churches in the 1830s under the influence of Fullerism could almost be describing our present scene, and it is this scene to which Dr George M. Ella addresses his Introductory Essay. He describes the destructive effects that Fullerism has had upon the churches of our own day and demonstrates the vital need for a return to the preaching of those doctrines defended by Rushton.

Whilst this work is primarily polemical in nature Rushton’s calling is not just to “root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down” (Jeremiah 1:10) but also to “build, and to plant” and he fulfils this by setting forth both Christ and His work. There is much here to instruct and edify us in the glorious doctrine of Christ and His precious atoning work for sinners. The author demonstrates ably that this is always set forth in the word of God in a particular and distinguishing manner, not just in the New Testament but also in the Old, for did not God call His particular people Israel out of Egypt on the night of Passover? Was a lamb slain for the Egyptians?

I highly recommend the purchase and reading of this book which is as relevant in our day - when many seem to have been taken in by Fuller’s errors and confusion regarding Christ’s work upon the cross - as when it was first published. Oh, that God would be pleased to open the eyes of sinners to see the truths that William Rushton faithfully defended, that they might be able to say, with the apostle Paul, “I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me”!

Reviewed by Ian Potts

A new easy-to-read evaluation of the teaching of Andrew Fuller by Paul Fahy

The Problem of Fullerism

Copies available price £3.50 inc. postage, from New Focus or Paul Fahy, Understanding Ministries, 3 Vineries Close, Worthing, BN13 2DW. Tel: 01903 694131 email: paul.fahy@tesco.net

Particular Redemption
& The Theology of Andrew Fuller

By William Rushton

Includes an Introductory Essay by Dr George M. Ella

“And an Overview of the Destructive Progress of Fullerism”

“When Rushton first addressed the errors of Fullerism he did so by exposing its faulty view of Christ’s atoning work. By reprinting Particular Redemption, we hope to show free grace believers where the central error of this teaching lies and how best to answer its modern advocates.”

From the Foreword by Peter L Meney

see advert on back page for details
NEW FOCUS  February / March  2007

MALTA

MSIDA. Trinity Evangelical Church
Misrah il-Barrieri Street
Sun. 10.30am & 6.00pm. Wed. 7.30pm.
Pastor Paul Mizzi, Tel: 00356 804417,
email: paulmizzi@shadow.net.mt

BOOKS & GENERAL

WEYMOUTH. Independent Evangelical Church,
W.I. Hall, Gallway Road, Wyke Regis, Weymouth.
Sun. 11.00am, 6.30pm. Sec. John Mann, Tel: 01305 774523

LONDON

MERTON Evangelical Church, Nelson Grove Road,
London, SW19 2LG. Sun. 11.00am & 5.45pm, Tue. 8.00pm
Pastor: John Graham, Tel: 0208 540 6104.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

WHITBY. West Cliff Congregational
Skinner Street / Albert Place. Sun. 10.30am & 6.30pm.
Rev. Vic Hope, Tel: 01947 605564.
Email: vic@reformedwhitby.free-online.co.uk

In stock now ...

John Gill DD
Commentary on the Whole Bible
Burgundy/Gilt Smythe sewn hardcover
( 9 vol. set, Baptist Standard Bearer Edition )
£235.00

Visit our website or ring for more details

21 Queen Street, Ossett, West Yorkshire, WF5 8AS
Tel: 01924 260502 or go to www.christianbookshopossett.co.uk

CHURCHES

ABERDEENSHIRE
FRASERBURGH. The Sovereign Grace Fellowship.
The Gospel Hall, Cairnbulg. Sun. 11.00am. 6.00pm.
Rev. Dr James Millar 01358 701323 &
Rev. Paul Jennings 01346 583433.

CO. DURHAM
BARNARD CASTLE. Eggleburn Baptist Church,
Eggleston, off B6282. Sun. 10.30am. Fri. 7.30pm.
Preacher: Peter L. Meney, Tel: 01833 650797.
Email: pastor@eggleburn.org.uk
Website: www.eggleburn.org.uk Visitors welcome.

CUMBRIA (LAKE DISTRICT)
KENDAL. Bethel Strict Baptist Chapel, Chapel Lane,
Kirkland (just off main street at south end of town).
Sun. 10.30am. Thu. 7.00pm. Pastor: Kevin M. Price
Visitors ring to confirm times. Tel: 01539 821596.
Email: bethelsbchapelkendal@hotmail.com

CHANNEL ISLES
GUERNSEY. Bethesda Strict Baptist Church,
Mont Marche, Forest, Guernsey. All welcome.
Sun. 11.00am, 6.00pm. Wed. 7.30pm (please check).
Pastor: Graham Miller. Tel: 01481 248016.

DENBIGHSHIRE
LLANGOLLEN. Glanrafon Evangelical Church, Princess
Street, Llangollen. Sun. 11.00am & 6.00pm. Wed. 7.00pm.
Pastor: Doug Pearse, Tel: 01978 861236.
www.glanrafonevangelicalchurch.org.uk

DORCHESTER. Grace Baptist Church.
Boys Brigade Hall, Sawmill Lane, Weymouth Road,
Dorchester. (by Sports Ground nr Tesco’s) Sun. 11.00am.
Pastor Frederick Serjeant, Tel: 01300 341670.
pastor@gracebaptistchurch.org.uk

WEYMOUTH. Independent Evangelical Church,
W.I. Hall, Gallway Road, Wyke Regis, Weymouth.
Sun. 11.00am, 6.30pm. Sec. John Mann, Tel: 01305 774523

LONDON

MERTON Evangelical Church, Nelson Grove Road,
London, SW19 2LG. Sun. 11.00am & 5.45pm, Tue. 8.00pm
Pastor: John Graham, Tel: 0208 540 6104.

NORTH YORKSHIRE

WHITBY. West Cliff Congregational
Skinner Street / Albert Place. Sun. 10.30am & 6.30pm.
Rev. Vic Hope, Tel: 01947 605564.
Email: vic@reformedwhitby.free-online.co.uk

BOOKS & GENERAL

Weymouth Christian Books
25A Trinity Road, Weymouth, Dorset. DT4 8TJ
Open 9.30am - 1.30pm, Monday - Saturday,
Evangelical & Reformed. Tel: 01300 341670.
Email: pastor@gracebaptistchurch.org.uk

The Presbyterian Standard quarterly magazine of the
James Begg Society. For introductory copy write to David
Moran, 7 Cearn Sheileidh, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1
2YW or email donald@morgan2476.plus.com

Gospel Standard Trust Publications
12(b) Roundwood Lane, Harpenden, Hertfordshire
Tel : 01582 765448 Email : gstrust@btconnect.com
Publishers of good solid Christian literature.

The Biblical Library (N.W.)
An excellent library resource. Stock contains biography,
devotional, theology, sermons and an extensive tape
ministry. Books sent for the refund of postage. For further
details: Mr Roy Thornton, Tel. 01253 854527

RECORDED SERMONS

Don Fortner
Choose your format ...

VIDEO CASSETTES (New 97)
DVDs
AUDIO CASSETTES

All Priced £5.00 (post free)
Available from: New Focus
The Cairn, Hill Top, Eggleston, Co. Durham, DL12 0AU

21 Queen Street, Ossett, West Yorkshire, WF5 8AS
Tel: 01924 260502 or go to www.christianbookshopossett.co.uk

CHURCHES

26
The Bible in a Year

Read the whole Bible once a year, the Psalms & New Testament twice. Based on an arrangement by Robert Murray M’Cheyne. The centre column shows the day of the month. M’Cheyne suggests the columns to the left may be read by the family and those to the right in private.

### MARCH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### APRIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Leviticus 4</th>
<th>Psalms 1, 2</th>
<th>1 Cor 16</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>31</th>
<th>2 Cor 1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>5, 6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>7, 8</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11, 12</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>13, 14</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>15, 16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>19</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32</td>
<td>36</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33</td>
<td>37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34</td>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Subscriptions 2007/2008

**Annual subscription rates for single copies:**

(six issues per year including postage)

- **UK:** £13.50
- **Europe:** £18.50
- **Overseas:** £25.50

Please send each issue of New Focus, starting with the ……………… /……………… issue. I enclose £………………

Name ……………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

Address……………………………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

…………………………………………………………………………………………………………………………

………………….. Post Code………………

---

If you would like to advertise in the Classified Section of New Focus, please use this form.

The rate for Classified advertising is: £8.00 per entry.

Please make your cheque payable to: New Focus & send to:

‘The Cairn’, Hill Top, Eggleston, Co. Durham, DL12 0AU

**New Focus**

**NEW FOCUS** FEBRUARY / MARCH 2007
CHRIST IN ALL THE SCRIPTURES
Don Fortner

New title - just published!
An excellent survey in 66 chapters of each Book in
the Old and New Testaments, showing how Jesus
Christ crucified is the message of all of Scripture,
and as Paul put it, ‘all the counsel of God’.

Published by:
Go publications
THE CAIRN, HILL TOP, EGGLESTON, CO. DURHAM, DL12 0AU
TEL/FAX : 01833 650797
Hardback,
640 pages,
£26.95 post free

BASIC BIBLE DOCTRINE
Don Fortner

An easy to read summary of Bible teaching, contains
77 subject chapters from creation to the end times.
An excellent reference for new believers and those
who seek an overview of scriptural teaching with a
strong free grace emphasis.

Published by:
Go publications
THE CAIRN, HILL TOP, EGGLESTON, CO. DURHAM, DL12 0AU
TEL/FAX : 01833 650797
Hardback,
660 pages,
£26.95 post free